

Message Text

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INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

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S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 3 MOGADISCIO 1287

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, MARR, SO, US, UR

SUBJECT: SIAD'S SOMALIA: SOVIET AND US ROLES

REF: MOGADISCIO 1169

1. SIAD'S OBJECTIVES: PRESIDENT SIAD'S GOALS ARE TO MODERNIZE SOMALI ECONOMY ALONG SOCIALIST LINES AND TO MOBILIZE SOMALI MASSES TO THAT END. TO ACCOMPLISH HIS AMBITIONS HE REQUIRES (A) MASSIVE ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE (B) IDEOLOGICAL TOOLS (I.E., REVOLUTIONARY ACTION PROGRAM) (C) DOMESTIC STABILITY AND (D) SECURITY FROM EXTERNAL ATTACK.

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2. GREATEST BARRIERS TO FULFILLMENT OF THESE GOALS ARE (A) SOMALIA'S PRIMITIVE ECONOMIC BASE; AND (B) SOCIAL AND CULTURAL BACKWARDNESS -- ILLITERACY, TRIBALISM, NOMADIC WAYWARDNESS AND ISLAMIC REACTION, ALL OF WHICH FRUSTRATE TO VARYING DEGREES POLITICAL ENLIGHTENMENT OF MASSES. TO MODERNIZE SOMALI ECONOMY AND PROVIDE BASIS FOR SUSTAINED ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT, MOST DIRE NEED IS MASSIVE ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE (I.E., US \$ 600 MILLION OVER NEXT FIVE YEARS).

3. DESPITE SIAD'S ALLIANCES WITH USSR, US AND ARAB NATIONS SHOULD NOT RPT NOT UNDERESTIMATE SIAD'S DESIRE TO OBTAIN ECONOMIC HELP FROM ALL AVAILABLE SOURCES, INCLUDING US, PRC, ARAB NATIONS, WESTERN NATIONS, AS WELL AS MULTILATERAL DONORS. WHILE HE IS WILLING TO PLAY OFF VARIOUS DONORS AGAINST ONE ANOTHER IN HIS DRIVE TO MULTIPLY SOURCES OF FOREIGN AID, THERE ARE POLITICAL LIMITS TO HIS WILLINGNESS TO ACCOMMODATE WESTERN OR CONSERVATIVE ARAB INTERESTS WITH POLITICAL CONCESSIONS. WHILE HE RECOGNIZES THAT WITHOUT GREATER WESTERN OR ARAB INPUTS DEVELOPMENT WILL BE SLOWER, INTERNAL STABILITY MORE PRECARIOUS, HIS OWN POWER POSITION MORE EXPOSED AND HIS RELIANCE UPON USSR MORE ABSOLUTE, THESE ARE RISKS HE WILL TAKE RATHER THAN ABANDON HIS REVOLUTIONARY ORIENTATION TO OBTAIN MORE HELP.

4. SIAD'S MARXIST OR QTE SCIENTIFIC SOCIALIST UNQTE CONVICTIONS, HOWEVER CRUDE THEY MAY APPEAR, AS WELL AS HIS COLLABORATION WITH SOVIET UNION, ARE FACTS OF LIFE IN SOMALIA, BOTH FOR PRESENT AND MEDIUM TERM. IT IS A MISTAKE TO ASSUME THAT SIAD'S HOPES OF DIVERSIFYING SOURCES OF FINANCIAL AID -- EITHER FROM US OR ARABS -- DERIVE FROM SHORT TERM POLITICAL CONSIDERATIONS. HIS HOPES ARE DICTATED PRINCIPALLY BY HIS NEED TO SHOW RESULTS - BY HIS DRIVE TO SPEED UP DEVELOPMENT PROCESS AND POLITICAL TRANSFORMATION OF SOMALIA, A PROCESS WHICH WILL ULTIMATELY STRENGTHEN HIS OWN POWER POSITION IN SOMALIA AND HIS FLEXABILITY VIS-A-VIS MOSCOW.

5. MOREOVER, SIAD'S ALLIANCE WITH REVOLUTIONARY SOCIALISM GIVES COHERENCE AND DRIVE TO MASS MOBILIZATION AND MODERNIZATION OF SOMALI ECONOMY. WE SHOULD NOT RPT NOT DECEIVE OURSELVES THAT SIAD WOULD OR COULD RETOOL THIS IDEOLOGICAL MOTOR OR BE PERSUADED THAT FREE MARKET ECONOMY OR WESTERN INDIVIDUALISM COULD SERVE SOMALIA'S NEEDS, ESPECIALLY AFTER HUMILIATING PARLIAMENTARY ANARCHY

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OF SIXTIES. WE BELIEVE MOREOVER THAT WHATEVER THE PRACTICAL UTILITY OF SIAD'S NEED FOR REVOLUTIONARY IDEOLOGY, SIAD'S THINKING IS TOO DEEPLY DYED WITH MARXIST TINTS AND HIS BELIEF IN INEXORABLE MARCH OF WORLD SOCIALISM AND CAPITALISM'S INEVITABLE COLLAPSE TOO CONCLUSIVE TO BE ABANDONED FOR MORE LIBERAL WESTERN OR ARAB FINANCIAL AID. FOR SIAD, THERE IS NOTHING IN WEST OR IN ARAB WORLD WHICH COULD SUPPLANT THIS RUDIMENTARY MARXISM, EITHER AS IDEOLOGICAL FAITH OR AS FORCE FOR SOMALI NATION BUILDING.

6. SOVIET ROLE IN SOMALIA: AT PRESENT TIME, SIAD BELIEVES THAT HE NEEDS SOVIET MILITARY, ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL SUPPORT. IT IS UNREALISTIC FOR US OR ARABS TO BELIEVE THAT THEY COULD OUST SOVIET UNION BY OFFERING TO REPLACE SOVIET MILITARY OR ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE WITH THEIR OWN. NEITHER WEST NOR ARABS COULD SUPPLANT SOCIALISM'S IDEOLOGICAL GRIP, WHICH HAS HELPED BRING ABOUT HIS MILITARY DEPENDENCE UPON USSR TO GUARANTEE SOMALIA'S SECURITY (SEE BELOW). SOVIET UNION HAS LIMITED SIAD'S FLEXIBILITY BY ENCOURAGING OTHER BLOC OR SOCIALIST NATIONS TO SHARE IN ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE AND POLITICAL ACTION PROGRAMS. EAST GERMANS, CUBANS, NORTH KOREANS, CZECHS AND BULGARIANS NOW HELP USSR DEFRAID ECONOMIC AND TECHNICAL BURDENS OF SOMALIA'S SOCIALIST TRANSFORMATION. WHILE VALUE OF THESE CONTRIBUTIONS MAY BE EXAGGERATED, NEVERTHELESS THEY ADD IMPORTANT DIMENSION TO SOVIET PRESENCE. ANY DECISION BY SIAD TO REDUCE SOVIET PRESENCE IN ONE AREA WOULD HAVE REPERCUSSIONS FOR OTHER PROGRAMS AS WELL. THEIR TOTAL ECONOMIC INPUT IS IMPORTANT FOR SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT. THERE IS NO REASON TO REPLACE THIS ASSISTANCE, THERE IS HOWEVER EVERY REASON TO ADD TO IT.

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LIMDIS

7. SIAD BELIEVES MOREOVER THAT SOVIET-SUPPLIED SECURITY ASSISTANCE IS ESSENTIAL FOR SURVIVAL OF HIS REVOLUTION. WE BELIEVE IT LIKELY THAT SIAD HAS ENTERED INTO SECURITY AGREEMENT WITH USSR TO PROVIDE DIRECT ASSISTANCE TO SOMALIA IN EVENT OF EXTERNAL ATTACK. EVIDENCE IS CIRCUMSTANTIAL BUT IN OUR VIEW SUASIVE. DEPLOYMENT OF SAM-2'S AROUND MOGADISCIO -- AS WELL AS THEIR FUTURE DEPLOYMENT AT BERBERA AND ELSEWHERE -- WOULD BE PART OF SUCH AN AGREEMENT, WHICH WE CONCLUDE ALSO PROVIDES FOR LIMITED SUPPORT OR DEPLOYMENT OF SOVIET MILITARY PERSONNEL TO SOMALIA IN EVENT OF ATTACK. WE HAVE UNCONFIRMED REPORTS THAT SOVIET MILITARY OR NAVAL PERSONNEL DEPLOYED ON SOMALI SOIL DURING RECENT SOVIET WORLD-WIDE FLEET MANEUVERS (MOGADISCIO 0843). WE SHOULD ALSO TAKE NOTE OF

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RECENT TRANSFER FROM USSR TO SOMALIA OF TWELVE AN-12 AIRCRAFT, TRUCKS AND SOVIET MILITARY TEAMS DURING REFUGEE AIRLIFT TO SOUTH (MOGADISCIO 1236). WE THINK THIS TRANSFER OF EQUIPMENT AND PERSONNEL -- WHICH EXCEEDED PHYSICAL DEMANDS OF RESETTLEMENT PROGRAM -- WAS INTENDED TO DEMONSTRATE EXTENT TO WHICH USSR COULD OR WOULD DIRECTLY MOBILIZE ITS RESOURCES TO AID SOMALIA UNDER EMERGENCY CONDITIONS. IT MAY ALSO HAVE BEEN INTENDED AS PRECEDENT. IN ANY CASE, ITS MESSAGE SHOULD NOT RPT NOT BE READ SOLELY IN TERMS OF ECONOMIC RELIEF.

8. SIAD'S BELIEF THAT SOMALI REVOLUTION IS THREATENED BY IMPERIALISM OR ITS AGENTS IS PRODUCT OF HIS DIALECTICAL ASSUMPTIONS ABOUT NATURE OF STRUGGLE BETWEEN PROGRESSIVE WORLD SOCIALISM AND FORCES OF REACTION. BUT MORE SPECIFICALLY, SIAD'S FEARS ABOUT SOMALIA'S SECURITY SHOULD BE CREDITED TO SOVIET UNION AND ITS ADVISORS IN SOMALIA WHO HAVE DELIBERATELY AND SUCCESSFULLY SOLD SIAD ON NOTION OF US AGGRESSIVE INTENT. IN PAST, WE HAVE MEASURED SOMALIA'S MILITARY FORCES WITH RESPECT TO MORE AGGRESSIVE ENDS (I.E., IRREDENTIST AMBITIONS IN OGADEN, IN NFD, AND TFAI) AND DEFINED THEM IN TERMS OF SO-CALLED SOMALI THREAT. IN OUR VIEW, THIS HAS INVOLVED US IN UNQUESTIONED ASSUMPTIONS ABOUT SIAD AND HIS REGIME, INCLUDING THE EXAGGERATION OF THREAT OF SOMALI IRREDENTISM, WHICH IS NOT RPT NOT AT PRESENT A DOMINANT OR EVEN SIGNIFICANT FACTOR IN SIAD'S SOCIALIST NATION BUILDING.

9. SIAD PERCEPTION OF US: SIAD'S UNDERSTANDING OF US INTENTIONS TOWARDS SOMALIA IS ALMOST WHOLLY THE PRODUCT OF US ACTIVITIES OUTSIDE SOMALIA -- IN ETHIOPIA, IN MIDDLE EAST, AND IN INDIAN OCEAN -- AS SEEN THROUGH THE GROSS DISTORTIONS OF THE SOVIET

LENS. CONSOLIDATION OF SOVIET POSITION IN SOMALIA HAS BEEN AIDED BY SOVIET UNION'S ABILITY TO DEMONSTRATE ALMOST AT WILL US HOSTILITY TO SIAD REGIME, AN EFFORT WHICH WAS BUTTRESSED IN PART BY SUSPENSION OF US ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS FOLLOWING SIAD'S ASSUMPTION OF POWER. POLICY PAPER PREPARED BY MINDEFENSE GENERAL SAMANTAR IN MID-1973 ENTITLED QTE GLOBAL STRATEGY OF IMPERIALISM UNQTE GIVES BASIC POLICY LINE WHEN CONSEQUENCES US STILL LIVES WITH TODAY, ALTHOUGH SOME POINTS HAVE BEEN MODIFIED IN PART BY SIAD'S PERCEPTION OF DETENTE. BASIC POINTS IN PAPER ARE AS FOLLOWS:
-- SOMALIA REPRESENTS KEY TO DOMINATION OF INDIAN OCEAN, ARAB GULF AND RED SEA AND CONSEQUENTLY IS THREAT TO IMPERIALISTS' STRATEGY
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IN THIS AREA OF WORLD.
-- US INTEREST IN AREA EXPLAINED BY FACT THAT BY 1980 US WILL DEPEND UPON GULF FOR 50 PERCENT OF ITS OIL NEEDS.
-- US NAVAL MOVEMENTS IN AREA AIMED AT INTIMIDATING PROGRESSIVE STATES WHO HAVE REBELLED AGAINST IMPERIALISM.
-- BECAUSE OF SOMALIA'S GROWING ECONOMIC IMPORTANCE (OIL AND URANIUM POSSIBILITIES), IMPERIALISTS WILL INITIATE LIMITED WARS IN AREA AND CREATE CLIENT STATES TO ADVANCE THEIR INTERESTS.
-- IMPERIALISTS WILL ALSO ENCOURAGE REACTIONARY REGIMES IN AREA (E.E., ETHIOPIA AND KENYA) TO MOVE AGAINST PROGRESSIVE REGIMES. IN TIME, REACTIONARY STATES GRADUALLY WILL BECOME MILITARY ARSENALS AND BASES FOR IMPERIALISM. IN REDSEA AND INDIAN OCEAN, ISRAEL AND OTHER REACTIONARY REGIMES HAVE BEEN CHOSEN TO EXECUTE IMPERIALIST DOMINATION.

10. SOVIET SUCCESS IN CONVINCING SIAD OF US STRATEGY IN AREA AND QTE LIMITED WAR UNQTE TACTIC BEST DEMONSTRATED BY SIAD'S OBSESSIVE FEARS IN MID-1973 THAT US AND ISRAEL WERE URGING ETHIOPIAN INVASION OF SOMALIA. WE BELIEVE THOSE FEARS PROVIDED GROUNDWORK FOR DELIVERIES OF MORE ADVANCED WEAPONRY IN EARLY 1974, INCLUDING MIG-21'S, SAM-2'S AND PERHAPS STYX MISSILES.

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LIMDIS

11. DESPITE SIAD'S RELIANCE UPON USSR TO SAFEGUARD SOMALIA'S SECURITY, THERE APPEAR TO BE GENUINE LIMITS TO SIAD'S VOLUNTARY MILITARY COMPLICITY WITH SOVIET UNION. BERBERA AFFAIR SUGGESTS TO US THAT SIAD RELUCTANT TO GIVE SOVIET UNION MILITARY ADVANTAGES IN SOMALIA WHICH GO BEYOND SOMALIA'S OWN DEFENSIVE REQUIREMENTS AND WHICH WOULD MAKE SOMALIA PARTY TO US/SOVIET DISPUTE IN AREA. AS WE CAN NOW DIMLY PERCEIVE POSSIBLE LIMITS TO SIAD'S DESIRE TO FULLY ACCOMMODATE USSR WITH MILITARY CONCESSIONS, WE MIGHT ALSO HOPE THAT SIAD WOULD SHOW SOME GREATER INDEPENDENCE IN HIS IDEOLOGICAL LINKS WITH MOSCOW AS ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT PROCEEDS DURING THIS DECADE. SOVIET INTENT IS OF COURSE TO MANIPULATE SOMALI ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND POLITICAL EVOLUTION IN SECRET

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SUCH A WAY THAT SOMALIA BECOMES SOVIET CLIENT STATE. US INTENT SHOULD BE TO LIMIT ADVANTAGES SOVIET UNION OBTAINS IN SOMALIA AND TO ENCOURAGE MORE INDEPENDENT AND NON-ALIGNED DEVELOPMENT.

12. ONE OF BASIC FACTORS IN SIAD'S RELATIONS WITH USSR IS HIS UNDERSTANDING OF US INTENT TOWARDS SOMALIA. SIAD'S UNDERSTANDING OF US GOALS IS TO LARGE EXTENT PRODUCT OF US ACTIVITIES OUTSIDE SOMALIA -- PARTICULARLY IN INDIAN OCEAN, HORN OF AFRICA, ARABIAN PENINSULA, MIDDLE EAST, ETC. SO LONG AS OUR POLICY COURSE

IS FIXED IN THOSE AREAS WE ARE LIMITED IN OUR ABILITY TO PERSUADE SIAD OF INNOCENCE OF US INTENTIONS. WHILE WE HAVE LITTLE FLEXIBILITY AT PRESENT IN THOSE OTHER AREAS, WE APPEAR TO HAVE SOME GREATER FREEDOM OF INITIATIVE IN HORN ITSELF.

13. OVER PAST YEARS, US AND SOVIET UNION HAVE MAINTAINED ECONOMIC AND MILITARY ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS IN ETHIOPIA AND SOMALIA -- A MILITARY ASSISTANCE BALANCE THAT HAS ABETTED THE EXPANSION OF SOVIET RATHER THAN US INTERESTS IN AREA. DURING THIS PERIOD, SOVIET UNION HAS SUCCESSFULLY EXPANDED ITS PRESENCE IN SOMALIA AND INCREASED FACILITIES AVAILABLE TO SOVIET INDIAN OCEAN FLEET AT BERBERA. SOVIET MILITARY DESIGNS FOR SOMALIA ARE NEVERTHELESS INCOMPLETE, AS INDICATED BY SOVIET CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITY NOW UNDERWAY AT BERBERA AND ELSEWHERE. WHILE SUCCESSES SOVIET UNION HAS ENJOYED AS RESULT OF THIS POWER EQUATION WERE MANIFEST IN BERBERA REVELATIONS, WHAT IS LESS CLEAR ARE ADVANTAGES US HAS OBTAINED AS RESULT OF ITS OWN PROGRAMS IN HORN.

14. SINCE US/SOVIET MILITARY ASSISTANCE BALANCE IN AREA HAS FAVORED SOVIET EXPANSION IN SOMALIA AND ADVANCEMENT OF ITS INTERESTS IN INDIAN OCEAN, WE WOULD EXPECT THAT USSR WOULD FAVOR CONTINUATION OF STATUS QUO UNTIL SOVIET MILITARY DESIGNS ON SOMALIA ARE COMPLETE OR EVENTS EVOLVE IN ETHIOPIA IN SUCH A WAY THAT MOSCOW WOULD FIND IT EXPEDIENT TO SEE THAT BALANCE DISSOLVED. THERE ARE AMPLE INDICATIONS THAT USSR SUPPORTS THE STATUS QUO. SUCH SUPPORT IS IMPLICIT IN SELF-SERVING SOVIET SUGGESTIONS THAT IT CAN AND WILL RESTRAIN SOMALI IRREDENTIST AMBITIONS AS WELL AS IN SOVIET SUPPORT FOR POLITICAL SOLUTION TO ERITREAN PROBLEM. IF STATUS QUO CONTINUES TO FURTHER SOVIET UNION'S INTERESTS WITHOUT PROMOTING OUR OWN, THEN SURELY TIME HAS COME FOR US TO CONSIDER WAYS IN WHICH POWER EQUATION MIGHT BE DISSOLVED TO OUR ADVANTAGE AND TO DETRIMENT OF SOVIET AMBITIONS IN HORN.

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15. NOTWITHSTANDING US MILITARY ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS TO ETHIOPIA, HOWEVER, SIAD SEEMED TO ACCEPT US/SOVIET DETENTE AS ENCOURAGING SIGN THAT US COULD COLLABORATE WITH REGIMES WHOSE IDEOLOGIES DIFFERENT FROM ITS OWN AND THAT NEW ERA IN SOMALI/US RELATIONS POSSIBLE. RESUMPTION OF BILATERAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS WOULD SHOW SIAD THAT US WILLING ASSIST HIS REGIME. US ENCOURAGEMENT TO MORE CONSERVATIVE ARAB STATES TO PARTICIPATE IN SOMALI ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT NOTWITHSTANDING SIAD'S PRESENT MILITARY ALLIANCES WITH USSR AND HIS RADICAL ORIENTATION WOULD ALSO SERVE TO STRENGTHEN HIS CONFIDENCE IN US INTENTIONS. BUT UNLESS US AND OTHER WESTERN AND ARAB ASSISTANCE IS SIGNIFICANT FACTOR IN SOMALI DEVELOPMENT AND SIAD'S CONFIDENCE IN US CERTAIN ENOUGH TO CONVINCE HIM THAT FURTHER MILITARY/POLITICAL COMPLICITY WITH USSR NOT RPT NOT ESSENTIAL TO SAFEGUARD SOMALI REVOLUTION AGAINST EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL THREATS, THEN SOVIET POSITION IN SOMALIA CAN ONLY

INCREASE AT EXPENSE OF US AND WESTERN INTERESTS IN REGION.
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